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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
COMPREHENSIVE TEST-BAN TREATY
GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION:
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT
AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

Letter dated 3 August 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations of the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the joint communiqué of the twenty-eighth ASEAN ministerial meeting, which was held in Brunei Darussalam on 29 and 30 July 1995.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 38, 57, 62, 70, 88 (a) and 92, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Pengiran ABDUL MOMIN
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Joint Communiqué of the Twenty-Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held at Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, on 29 and 30 July 1995

1. The Twenty-Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held in Bandar Seri Begawan from 29 to 30 July 1995.

2. The Foreign Ministers welcomed Viet Nam as the seventh member of ASEAN. They also welcomed the accession of Cambodia to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia. Cambodia was also granted observer status. They believed that these events marked a historic step towards building a South-East Asian community and looked forward to the future when all South-East Asian nations become members of ASEAN. The Ministers called for increased cooperation with Cambodia and Laos to assist them in preparing for their eventual membership in ASEAN.

3. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the decision by Myanmar to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia.

Political and security cooperation

4. Considering the important role of ASEAN in maintaining peace, stability, and prosperity in this region as well as in enhancing cooperation in the wider Asia-Pacific, the Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with others, particularly ASEAN's Dialogue and Consultative Partners, and Observers. In reviewing the developments of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) since its inauguration in Bangkok last year, the Ministers expressed satisfaction with the progress made thus far. In this regard, they reaffirmed that the ASEAN Concept Paper on the ARF has contributed significantly towards moving the ARF process forward at a pace comfortable to all participants. They re-emphasized ASEAN's role as the primary driving force of the ARF which is a high-level consultative forum to facilitate open dialogue and discussions on political and security issues of common interest and concern in the Asia-Pacific region. They also stressed the importance of building confidence among ARF participants so as to develop a more predictable and constructive pattern of behaviour. This, they felt, would ensure lasting peace, stability, and prosperity for the region and its people. They looked forward to a successful second ARF meeting.

5. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction with the progress made by ASEAN in the dialogue and consultation process on political and security issues which now included the ASEAN China Senior Officials Consultation (ASEAN-China SOM) and the ASEAN-European Union Senior Officials Meeting (ASEAN-EU SOM). The Ministers also expressed their appreciation to Canada for the initiative of hosting the ASEAN-Canada consultation in May 1995, in order for ASEAN's view to be made known to the G-7 Meeting in Halifax. The Ministers also expressed their satisfaction over the results of these consultations. The Ministers agreed that such meetings served to strengthen ASEAN's cooperative relations with various countries and partners.

6. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress made in the implementation of ASEAN's "Programme of action on ZOPFAN". The Ministers also noted the positive progress in solving the legal and technical aspects of the draft Treaty on South-East Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ). They further noted similar progress in deciding on the most appropriate instrument by which countries outside the region would be able to associate themselves with the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia. The Foreign Ministers agreed that the association of non-South-East Asian countries to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation would enhance peace and stability of the region.

7. The Foreign Ministers commended the good cooperative relations developed between ASEAN and non-governmental bodies such as the ASEAN Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP). They agreed that these bodies had provided useful ideas and proposals for political and security cooperation in the region.

International and regional issues

8. The Foreign Ministers exchanged views on the current regional and international situation. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the continuing positive developments in ASEAN and the wider Asia-Pacific. In this regard, they stressed the importance of a stable relationship among the major Powers. The Ministers also expressed the hope that countries in the region would continue to work together to maintain security and stability to ensure rapid economic growth and progress.

9. The Foreign Ministers expressed their concern over recent events in the South China Sea. They encouraged all parties concerned to reaffirm their commitment to the principles contained in the 1992 ASEAN Declaration of the South China Sea, which urges all claimants to resolve their differences by peaceful means and to exercise self-restraint. They also called on them to refrain from taking actions that could destabilize the region, including possibly undermining the freedom of navigation and aviation in the affected areas. They also encouraged the claimants to address the issue in various bilateral and multilateral forums. In this regard, they reiterated the significance of promoting confidence-building measures (CBMs) and mutually beneficial cooperative ventures in the ongoing Informal Workshop Series on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea initiated by Indonesia.

10. The Foreign Ministers discussed the situation in the Korean Peninsula. They welcomed the positive outcome of the talks held in Kuala Lumpur between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and expressed the hope that this would lead to the full implementation of the Agreed Framework reached in Geneva. The Ministers reiterated their belief that resuming the dialogue between the DPRK and the Republic of Korea was extremely important for peace and security in the Korean Peninsula. They expressed the hope that these developments would contribute to the improvement of the situation.

11. The Foreign Ministers expressed grave concern over the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and issued a statement on the subject.

12. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the progress made in the Middle East peace process, in particular the implementation of the PLO-Israeli Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements of 1993. The Ministers stressed the importance of continuing the discussions between the Palestinians and Israelis to reach an agreement on the details of the withdrawal of Israeli soldiers from the West Bank. They also welcomed the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel and the ongoing discussions between Syria and Israel and believed that these would contribute to a comprehensive settlement to the Middle East problem.

13. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the successful outcome of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held in Bandung from 25 to 27 April 1995. They supported in particular the NAM Ministers' pledge to do their utmost to strengthen South-South cooperation with a view to achieving economic security and collective self-reliance. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Asian-African Conference held in Bandung on 24 April 1995 and reiterated their conviction that the objectives enunciated in the Final Communiqué of the Conference continue to be valid.

14. The Foreign Ministers emphasized the importance of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in promoting international peace and security. Bearing in mind the objectives of general and complete disarmament, the Foreign Ministers noted the outcome of the recent 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT and attached particular importance to the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones by the year 2000. In this regard, the Foreign Ministers deplored the resumption or planned resumption of nuclear tests in the Asia-Pacific in view of the commitment of all State Parties to the NPT to exert utmost restraint on nuclear-weapons testing and to conclude the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996. They also called on all nuclear-weapon States to desist from testing nuclear devices.

15. In view of the United Nations important role and contribution to development in the last 50 years, the Foreign Ministers emphasized the need for ensuring that the United Nations remain at the centre of efforts to enhance international economic cooperation for development. They attached great importance to the elaboration of an Agenda for Development as the basis for restoring the centrality of development in the work of the United Nations and in addressing the needs and priorities of developing countries. Towards this end, and in order to reinforce the development role of the United Nations, the Ministers expressed support for the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77. The United Nations organizations which promote and enhance international economic cooperation for sustained economic growth and sustainable development on a global basis including UNCTAD and UNIDO, should be strengthened. The Ministers strongly felt that the mandate of the United Nations in the field of development should be clearly emphasized in all attempts to reform, revitalize and strengthen the world Organization, especially in conjunction with the observance of its fiftieth foundation anniversary this year.

16. The Foreign Ministers noted with appreciation all efforts that have been undertaken by the international community within the framework of the

Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) of 1989. The Foreign Ministers expressed serious concern over recent developments which affected the implementation and successful conclusion of the CPA. They urged all resettlement countries to weigh carefully the implications of adopted proposed legislation which has already generated false hopes of resettlement directly from the camps in the first asylum countries. They reiterated their commitment to the objectives of the CPA which remained the most realistic option to resolve the problem of Indo-Chinese refugees. They called on all parties to the CPA to remain fully committed to the implementation of the relevant Memoranda of Understanding and the decisions of the Fifth and Sixth Steering Committee Meetings with the view to bringing it to a conclusion by the target date of the end of 1995. They called upon the donor community to continue to provide adequate resources to the UNHCR to complete its operations.

Fifth ASEAN Summit

17. The Foreign Ministers looked forward to the Fifth Meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government to be held in Thailand on 14-15 December 1995. The heads of Government will review developments and progress in ASEAN since the last Summit in Singapore in 1992. The Fifth Summit will chart ASEAN's future direction towards intensifying political, economic and functional cooperation to make ASEAN an even more cohesive and dynamic regional grouping. The Foreign Ministers also requested Thailand as the host country to invite the heads of Government of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar to a meeting with the ASEAN Heads of Government during the Summit.

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

18. The Foreign Ministers noted that the leaders of Asia and Europe welcomed the holding of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) scheduled for early 1996 in Thailand. They agreed that the Meeting would serve as a means of establishing strong links between Asia and Europe at the highest level.

International economic issues

19. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the ratification of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round by all member countries. They noted Viet Nam's application for WTO membership and expressed the hope that Viet Nam would soon be admitted. They urged the timely access of major trading countries and economies to the WTO and called on all signatories to implement their Uruguay Round commitments in a faithful and timely manner. They requested members to reaffirm their commitment to the principle of free trade by liberalizing their markets further and continuing with their efforts in bringing down trade barriers in accordance with their commitments and the provisions of the Uruguay Round agreements. Recognizing that trade would become more competitive as a result of the Uruguay Round, the Ministers emphasized the need for member countries to keep pace with world market developments by conducting improvements in production, quality control, product innovation, distribution, financing and technology.

20. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction with the appointment of Singapore as the Chairman of the General Council of the WTO, and Thailand as the Chairman of the Committee of Agriculture of the WTO, and that the First

WTO Ministerial Conference will be held in Singapore. They noted that these are manifestations of the international recognition of the important role played by ASEAN in promoting global trade liberalization.

21. The Foreign Ministers requested the International Monetary Fund to monitor international currency movements more closely in order to avoid a financial crisis similar to that of Mexico's. They cautioned that the continuing imbalances in the international currency markets might seriously affect financial flows to the region and might have adverse consequences for countries with large foreign debt obligations. The Foreign Ministers agreed on the need for enhanced cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO to further strengthen the global economic system.

22. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their stand, as underlined by the ASEAN Labour Ministers during their informal meeting at Chiang Mai in April 1995, to oppose any attempt to link labour standards with international trade and to use labour standards to interfere in the internal affairs of developing countries. They welcomed the recent position adopted by the ILO Governing Body's Working Party to suspend any further discussion of the link between international trade and social standards. The Foreign Ministers renewed their call on the ILO to undertake a thorough review of labour standards, some of which are not relevant to the economic and labour environment of the developing countries on the road to industrialization.

23. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers noted the decisions of the Halifax Summit. Whilst recognizing that the prevention of financial crisis is the preferred course of action, the Foreign Ministers welcomed the Summit's decision to create an emergency fund to defuse future Mexico-type financial crises. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the Summit's call for a comprehensive approach by lending institutions to help the poorest countries with large debt burdens. At the same time, the Foreign Ministers expressed concern that no stronger actions were taken for coordinating macroeconomic policies among the G-7 countries to manage the sharp currency fluctuations in the world's foreign exchange markets.

ASEAN Free Trade Area

24. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the significant progress made in the implementation of AFTA. They expressed their full support for the reduction of the time-frame in the implementation of AFTA from 15 to 10 years ending in 2003 and noted that member countries will begin to implement the new tariff reduction schedules by 1 January 1996. The Ministers also took note of the inclusion of the products in the Temporary Exclusion List which is currently being worked by member countries with the list for the first instalment being finalized by the Seventh AFTA Council in September 1995.

25. The Ministers also called upon member countries to accelerate harmonization of customs procedures, tariff nomenclature and standards and to intensify their efforts to remove non-tariff barriers in order to further accelerate growth in intra-ASEAN trade. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the decision to include unprocessed agriculture products in the CEPT Scheme and called upon member countries to intensify their efforts to realize it, taking into account the level of development of the respective countries. They however expressed

the hope that member countries should make all efforts in ensuring that the Temporary Exclusion List and the Sensitive List are kept to a minimum. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the establishment of the AFTA Unit and the National AFTA Units in the respective member countries which will facilitate greater private sector participation in the AFTA process.

26. They welcomed the initiation of consultations between ASEAN and Australia and New Zealand to discuss possible linkages between AFTA and the Australia-New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (ANZCERTA) with a view to enhancing economic interaction between the two regions.

Other areas of economic cooperation

27. In view of the increasing competitiveness of the world's economy and the rapid globalization of trade, the Foreign Ministers supported efforts of the Economic Ministers to expand economic cooperation in other areas such as services, intellectual property and investment. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the decision of the ASEAN Economic Ministers to look into new activities and/or schemes to accelerate industrial cooperation in the region with emphasis on technology-based industries and physical infrastructure investments. In this regard, they noted that a Framework Agreement on Cooperation in Services and ASEAN Framework on Intellectual Property Cooperation are being formulated. The Foreign Ministers agreed that ASEAN cooperation in services would entail commitments on an ASEAN preferential basis aimed at realizing a free trade area in services in the long run. They also supported efforts to explore the possibility of setting up an ASEAN patent and trademark system.

28. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the initiatives taken by the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry to sign the MOU on ASEAN Cooperation and Joint Approaches in Agriculture and Forest Products Promotion Scheme in August 1994. The MOU aims at sustaining the expansion of ASEAN agriculture and forest products and at enhancing collaboration between the public and private sectors.

East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC)

29. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to an early realization of the EAEC. They recognized the usefulness of more focused discussions on specific economic and development issues, particularly on matters that will contribute to greater development of the East Asia region.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

30. The Foreign Ministers noted that APEC had made significant progress towards its long-term goal of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific regions as embodied in the Bogor Declaration. The Ministers emphasized the need for APEC to proceed in a manner consistent with the principles of the GATT/WTO. Noting the importance of the Kuching consensus and the considerable progress made by APEC since that consensus, the Foreign Ministers reaffirmed that ASEAN should continue to play a central role in APEC. The Foreign Ministers underscored the importance of economic and technical cooperation in the Bogor Declaration and in this context welcomed Japan's initiative on "Partners for Progress". The Foreign Ministers expressed the hope that the APEC Economic

Leaders Meeting in Osaka and the Seventh APEC Ministerial Meeting to be hosted by Japan in November 1995 would carry forward the APEC process.

Functional cooperation

31. The Foreign Ministers agreed that, as part of the efforts to achieve greater social and economic progress in the region and to enable ASEAN to face the challenges of the twenty-first century, ASEAN functional cooperation should be further strengthened and intensified.

32. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction that cooperation in science and technology, environment, culture and information, social development, and drugs and narcotics control had further intensified and increased in focus with the completion of Plans of Action for each of the five functional areas and the implementation of a number of initial activities. They also expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the preparation of the ASEAN Regional Programme on Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS.

33. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the decision of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Management of Transboundary Pollution to adopt the ASEAN Cooperation Plan on Transboundary Pollution with a view to managing the increasing periodicity and worsening impact of transboundary pollution in the region.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Cooperation with Dialogue Partners

34. The Foreign Ministers noted that the Dialogue Process has acquired greater importance in promoting a better understanding of issues brought about by rapid changes in the world environment. The Ministers expressed the hope that although the Dialogues shall continue to serve as a forum for discussing divergent interests, it could place more emphasis on shared interests and objectives in addressing global challenges. The Ministers recognized that the inaugural ASEAN-EU SOM, held in Singapore from 2 to 4 May 1995, marked an important step in this direction and paved the way for the deepening of mutual understanding and economic cooperation between the European Union and ASEAN.

35. The Foreign Ministers recognized the growing significance of economic cooperation with the Dialogue Partners. They reiterated their request for the Dialogue Partners to be more forthcoming in their response to ASEAN's concerns on trade, investment and market access issues. The Ministers expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by the Dialogue Partners in the implementation of various development projects. They noted that development cooperation projects are increasingly directed at promoting economic and commercial objectives.

Cooperation with Non-Dialogue Partners

36. The Foreign Ministers noted that ASEAN cooperation with India in the fields of trade, investment, science and technology and tourism has made progress. Modalities for implementing ASEAN-Pakistan Sectoral Relations have been

initiated. The Ministers noted the outcome of the First ASEAN-China Joint Science and Technology Meeting held in Brunei Darussalam in March 1995. The Foreign Ministers noted the progress in ASEAN-Russia relations and welcomed efforts being made to identify areas of mutual interest in order to enhance relations. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction with the expansion of ASEAN's relations with other regional organizations and noted the efforts undertaken by the ASEAN secretariat in this regard. The Foreign Ministers also noted that the ASEAN secretariat is undertaking a review of the criteria and priorities for ASEAN's external relations.